

Title:

Concerning Relations Between Georgia and the United States

Hon. & Member's Official Name:

Hon. Pete Sessions

Full Name of Congressional State:

Texas

Current Date:

Friday, June 22, 2018

Member's Name as it Appears in Official Record:

Mr. Sessions

****Type Extension to Remarks below, the space allotted will expand as you type****

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an issue that that could threaten the close relationship our country shares with the Republic of Georgia.

Last year marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Georgia. Since that time, Georgia has evolved into a strong ally of the United States with Georgians and Americans serving side-by-side in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Georgia has provided more troops in support of combat operations in Afghanistan on a per-capita basis than any other country in the world. The country also plays a key role in the Northern Distribution Network lines of communication that support NATO efforts in Afghanistan.

While Georgia and the United States have been great allies these past 25 years, that relationship is now under threat. Recently, the Government of Georgia began to take a series of aggressive and discouraging actions towards American companies operating in Georgia. Over the past year, I have received reports of increased mistreatment and harassment of American and European companies. In this time, we have also seen reports of favorable outreach to companies from Russia, Iran, and China. Simply put, this is a warning signal that should be taken very seriously.

Furthermore, in February of this year, our Director of National Intelligence, Daniel Coats, issued his office's "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community". Specifically, he highlighted issues with Georgia's recent ruling party as a top concern given their propensity for stifling political opposition, consolidating power, and causing internal issues as Georgia continues to face external threats from Russia.

Moving forward, it is my hope that the Government of Georgia will adhere to and respect the rule of law with regards to international obligations and the protection of intellectual property rights. In respecting and honoring freely negotiated conditions of both existing and future business investments from the United States, the Government of Georgia would serve to reaffirm and demonstrate their commitment to the shared principles of a fair and democratic market economy and our critically important transatlantic strategic partnership.

I yield back.

****The entries below are optional – use only if you are inserting a quoted source****

****Type quoted SOURCE TITLE below****

****Type quoted SOURCE AUTHOR below****

****Insert or Type the SOURCE TEXT below****

6/22/18

Mr. Sessions
TX-32